

Dr. Shufeldt explains the similarities in the skeletons of Swifts and Hummers by saying that "such similarities are due to physiological adaptation of structure, referable in the present instance to the peculiar flight of these birds, and the consequent requirements of the muscles involved in it." But what differences are there in the Swifts' flight from that of the Swallows' that should have caused such a remarkable modification towards the Hummingbirds? And are not the Swallows' and the Swifts' flight more similar *inter se* than that of either one to the Hummers? How is it then that the wings of Swifts and Hummers are more alike, even in the shape of the humerus and its processes?

Finally we take the liberty to introduce a scheme of the Picarians which we prepared last year for the bird-volume of the 'Standard Natural History.' The order Picariæ is quite polymorphic, but, after all, we do not regard it as so extremely unnatural. Some few forms may have to be eliminated, but until it be shown that these have had an ancestry different from the common stock from which most of them have sprung we consider it as consisting of the following super-families:

Homologonatus; desmopelmous;		<i>Cuculoideæ</i>	} dorsal tract furcate between the shoulders.	
		<i>Coracioidæ</i>		
Anomalo- gonatus.	{	X enters into the myologi- cal formula.	synpelmous	} dorsal tract simple be- tween the shoulders.
			<i>Colioidæ</i> ; feet pamproductylous	
		A alone consti- tutes the myolog- ical formula.	schizopelmous;	} dorsal tract furcate between the shoulders.
			antiopelmous;	
			heteropelmous;	
<i>Micropodoideæ</i>	<i>Picoidæ</i> ; zygodactylous . . .	} dorsal tract simple be- tween the shoulders.		
	<i>Trogonoidæ</i> ; heterodactylous { pamproductylous or { anisodactylous }			

We remark that the Goatsuckers are referred to the super-family *Coracioidæ*, consequently far from the Cypseli and Trochili, which we include in the super-family *Micropodoideæ*.

In the mean time, we are always thankful for the contributions of Dr. Shufeldt, and we learn with great satisfaction that it is his intention to take up the Trogons next. But we must warn against conclusions solely drawn from osteological characters, and in the present order, especially against such ones as are based chiefly in the features of the bony palate. A natural system cannot be based upon one single set of characters; all will have to be carefully considered, whether they are external or internal, before we can hope to understand the true relationship of the different groups.—L. S.

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